

is an issue that deserves to be a top priority of this Congress but has been ignored for years—the need to strengthen America's middle class. Our country has always been a land of opportunity. As a nation, we take pride that all Americans, no matter where they begin in life, have the opportunity to work hard, get ahead, and prosper. It is called the American dream, and it is what our country is all about.

Unfortunately, while it is still possible for Americans to do well, it is getting harder and harder all the time. America's middle class faces ever increasing obstacles. Incomes are going down, but costs are going up. More and more middle-class families are being squeezed, and this Congress has done nothing to stop that.

Let's look at the facts. There really is a middle-class squeeze under this Republican administration. Real household income has declined during the tenure of President Bush. It has declined by \$1,273 a year. That is pretty significant. This is median inflation adjusted household income. It was \$47,599 in 2000. Here is what it is 5 years later, \$46,326. That is not a record anyone should boast about.

The rich have been able to do much better. The average tax break for somebody over \$1 million is about \$38,000, where for someone under \$50,000, the tax break has been about \$6.

In addition to the household income declining, basic costs of the middle class have gone up. The rich are getting richer, the poor are getting poorer, and the middle class is getting squeezed.

The cost of going to college in these 5 years has gone up 44 percent. Health insurance premiums, when one can find health insurance, has gone up 71 percent. We are up to over 47 million Americans now with no health insurance and millions of others who are underinsured. Energy costs certainly have gone up. Parents are paying \$3,700 more than they were 5 years ago. Health insurance, if one can buy it, is up \$4,500 in the last 6 years. You are paying more.

This story only tells half the story. As families struggle to afford what they need, they also find themselves less secure. Since President Bush took office, 3.7 million more Americans are without employer-sponsored retirement plans. Almost 7 million more Americans are without health insurance, and millions more are carrying significant debt.

Since 2000, household debt has increased by 35 percent, or more than \$26,000. When we put all this together—declining incomes, skyrocketing prices, rising insecurity—it is no wonder the economy remains a top concern for the American people. The kitchen-table concerns are issues that matter most to families, yet they are also the issues that are routinely ignored or made worse by this Congress that has been given the name “do-nothing Congress,” and rightfully so.

Just listen to Washington Republicans to see how out of touch they are. They are convinced the economy is doing great. They believe we should stay the course. We not only want to stay the course in the war in Iraq, according to the President, we want to stay the course with the economy, even as families struggle like never before.

We can do better than the Republican record of failure—much better. We can take a new direction, and it starts by putting the middle class first for a change.

Democrats have developed a variety of proposals addressing the middle-class squeeze, but every time the Republican majority has blocked our efforts so they can help special interests.

As to rising gas prices, we proposed a ban on price gouging. The prices have dropped down. They are going to go back up. There is nothing that has changed substantially. All we need is a problem in Nigeria or another storm. The majority blocked our price-gouging legislation. They blocked it on behalf of the oil and gas industry. But, of course, they should, Mr. President, because this is the most energy-friendly administration we have had in the history of our country.

To lower the cost of prescription drugs, Democrats proposed repealing the Republican ban on negotiating for lower prices in Medicare, but the majority blocked that on behalf of the pharmaceutical lobby.

To bolster middle-class incomes, Democrats proposed ending tax breaks that encouraged companies to outsource jobs overseas, but the majority continues to support these tax breaks at the behest of multilevel, multinational corporations.

To cut college costs and help more Americans get ahead, we proposed making college tuition deductible from taxes. That is gone. The majority pushed through the largest student aid cut in the history of our country and allowed the college tuition deduction to expire even while pushing for huge tax breaks for special interests and multimillionaires.

The bottom line is that all too often in Republican Washington, special interests rule while the middle class is left behind. As I said, the rich are getting richer, the poor are getting poorer, and the middle class are getting squeezed, and it has never been so apparent as during these last 6 years. America literally cannot afford to stay the present course.

While Washington Republicans have been ignoring the plight of the middle class, they have been digging our Nation into a budget hole that will take decades to correct. As Senator CONRAD has explained so powerfully, since 2001, our national debt has exploded from \$5.8 trillion to \$8.5 trillion. The debt will double to \$11.6 trillion by 2010.

The debt owed to foreigners has already doubled. The United States has borrowed more from overseas interests—that is foreign countries—during

the Bush Presidency than we borrowed during all previous Presidencies combined. I think that is irresponsible, and our children and our grandchildren will pay the price.

We have several Democratic Senators who are experts on the economy who have come and spoken. Senator SARBANES, who sadly will retire at the end of this year, has been a wonderful Senator. He has handled the Banking Committee with expertise, and I so appreciate his coming to the floor today and talking about this issue. Our Democrat on the Joint Economic Committee, JACK REED, has done a wonderful job.

But I want to return to my main point. We need a new direction in America, one that strengthens the middle class. We believe it is long past time Washington focused on the people who work hard every day, play by the rules, and are the backbone of our Nation. They are being ignored, and they need our help. Our goal is not for Government to spend more; it is for families to spend less—less for college, less for health care, less for fuel, less for energy—all while enjoying an opportunity to succeed and prosper in the global economy and a chance at the American dream.

Mr. President, for 10 years, to show how little this Republican-dominated town feels about the poor, we have been unable to increase the minimum wage. When President Clinton was President, we tried and a filibuster by Republicans stopped us. The minimum wage—we believe Congress and Washington should focus on ways to help make the American dream come true, to help all Americans achieve their dreams. But to do that, we need to change course by, at long last, standing up to special interests and standing up for the common good. That is the Democratic vision. That is the new direction we seek. America's middle class in our Nation deserves no less.

U.S. ECONOMY CONTINUES TO PROSPER

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I have been very interested in the remarks of the distinguished Democratic leader, my friend, and I approach this issue from not just a slightly different perspective but from a very different perspective. I think it is important that we get our facts straight.

The robust health of the U.S. economy becomes more apparent with each passing day. Yet it is something about which we hear precious little except criticism, especially on the Senate floor. I would like to take just a few minutes to remind my colleagues about some of the positive aspects we are seeing about the state of the economy.

As we complete the fifth year of economic expansion, all signs indicate that the economy is as strong as it has ever been, and that we can expect continued economic growth for the foreseeable future. When President Bush became President, we were in the

throes of an economic recession at the end of the Clinton years. He inherited that, and the first year of his Presidency was filled with a recession. But in the last 5 years, we have had an economic expansion. The U.S. economy grew at an annual rate of 4.6 percent in the first half of this year, and that is an impressive clip at any time, but particularly so for a mature economy approaching full employment.

Economic forecasters estimate the gross domestic product in the current quarter will come close to 3 percent. While initially we may not welcome a reduction in the rate of growth, a 3-percent rate is actually very positive news. This is because a growth rate of around 3 percent would put us at a level of growth that many economists believe can be sustained indefinitely without risking inflationary pressures. It is mystifying to me that an economy this strong that has grown steadily for 5 full years now is not being recognized by everyone for what it is; namely, a remarkable jobs-producing machine. We have created 3.5 million jobs in the last 3 years and have more people employed today than ever before in the history of this country.

The unemployment rate is only 4.7 percent, a level that is below any rate seen in the United States between 1970 and 1997. Think about that: a rate below any rate seen in the U.S. between 1970 and 1997.

No matter how one cuts the numbers, the news on the job front of late has been good. The number of long-term unemployed is down, as is the unemployment rate for teenagers, women, African Americans, Hispanics, people without a high school degree, and people with only a high school degree.

While energy prices might have pushed the Consumer Price Index up a bit earlier in the year, I believe there was never a risk of higher inflation, and the financial markets now discount this possibility almost entirely. As Nobel Laureate Friedman put it:

Inflation is always a monetary phenomenon. As long as the Federal Reserve commits to contain inflation, we should not worry.

I think Ben Bernanke has demonstrated his determination to keep the scourge of inflation under control, and for that he deserves commendation. I believe his decision today to leave the short-term discount rate where it is makes perfect sense, given the recent data.

The benefits of sustained economic growth, the likes of which we have seen over the last 5 years, cannot be overstated. We are just now beginning to reap its benefits in the form of higher incomes for American workers. Median household incomes, stagnant since the 2001 recession, went up by 1.1 percent after adjusting for inflation in 2005. Now, that is median household income.

Contrary to the gloom and doom we are hearing from the other side on this floor, it went up by 1.1 percent, after adjusting for inflation in 2005. That is after the adjustment for inflation.

The preliminary data for 2006 suggests that income growth has accelerated strongly, with even the New York Times reporting an estimate that inflation-adjusted wages and salaries have gone up an annual rate of 7 percent thus far this year. This is a pattern that would be entirely consistent with what we witnessed during the expansion of the 1990s, one that ultimately lifted millions of households out of poverty. Yet all we hear is doom and gloom. That is what happens when people want to gain power.

The Federal Government has also benefitted from the sustained economic growth. Tax revenues—and this is with the tax cuts that we put in, and because of the tax cuts we put in over the past 5 years—have grown at the fastest rate since the inflationary 1970s. You can't discount that, no matter how much doom and gloom you spread all over this body. Revenue went up by nearly 15 percent last year, and as we approach the end of the current fiscal year, it is likely it will go up 12 percent this year. That is phenomenal.

In 2006, we will collect over a half of a trillion dollars more than we did in 2004—a truly awesome amount. The budget deficit has shrunk rapidly over these same 2 years, from \$412 billion in 2004 to roughly \$260 billion in 2006. Now, it is still too high, but as a percentage of GDP, it is one of the lowest over the last 40 years. That can't be discounted, in spite of the doom and gloom that we hear consistently on this floor.

The Congressional Budget Office was forecasting a budget deficit of \$100 billion larger than that as recently as March. Let me repeat, \$100 billion larger than the \$260 billion it was projected to be as recently as last March. Again, the strong budget growth we have benefitted from of late is reminiscent of what occurred in the late 1990s once the economy reached full employment and productivity growth picked up. It is also instructive to look at exactly where the additional tax revenues are coming from.

Now, let's get this straight because I get so tired of hearing the rich are getting richer and the poor are getting poorer. That is a slogan that really is pure folly. The top 1 percent of all earners—the top 1 percent of all earners—receive about 16 percent of all income but pay over 34 percent of all taxes. Let me repeat that. The top 1 percent of all earners receive about 16 percent of all income but pay over 34 percent of all taxes. The top 10 percent of all earners are paying two-thirds of all the taxes paid in this country—the top 10 percent.

Mr. President, 97 percent, all but 3 percent, 97 percent of all income tax revenue comes from the top 50 percent of all wage earners. That doesn't sound to me like the rich are getting richer. What the other side always seems to forget is that, in this great country, the middle class consistently rises to a higher position because of the opportu-

nities in this country if we continue to provide opportunities for economic growth through tax rate reductions and other methodologies.

When you say that the top 50 percent of all earners pay 97 percent of all income tax revenues, this means that the bottom half of income earners in this country are paying only 3 percent of all income taxes collected. Many of them do not pay anything. Many of them get money from the Federal Government for living. No one can correctly say that the rich are not paying their share of taxes.

Let me go over that again. The top 1 percent pay 34 percent of all income taxes. The top 10 percent are paying two-thirds of all income taxes. The top 50 percent pay 97 percent of all income taxes. The bottom 50 percent pay only 3 percent, and many of those do not pay income taxes at all.

No one can correctly say that the rich are not paying their share of taxes or that this economy is not a good economy. We all wish it could be even better, but when you have an economy as diverse as ours, as complex as ours, it is hard to say that this is not a good economy.

Those who have complained that income growth lagged behind the rest of the economy in the early years of the current economic expansion were absolutely correct. I share their frustration that it takes so long for income growth to permeate throughout all income levels. It is not enough to tell someone who is out of work or has been forced to take a pay cut that once the unemployment rate falls a bit more wages should pick up.

The Government should do what it can to help lift people out of poverty. Republicans and Democrats agree on this. It is not just the Democrats. We all agree on that. So to present this like only Democrats care, that is pure bunk.

However, the answer to this problem is not to take actions that would jeopardize economic growth. The solution is to keep the economy as strong as possible while making sure that those who get hurt by a faltering economy have the means to get up again, to help those who are underemployed or who are unemployed. We improved and expanded the earned-income tax credit, provided new funds for training and education, and during the recession we increased the duration of unemployment insurance.

Let's be honest about it. Both Republicans and Democrats care for those who are suffering or those who have not been doing as well. But the Democratic solution seems to be, let's increase taxes so we can spend more from the Federal Government. We know what that is going to do. That is going to stifle this economy and economic growth and hurt all those who are paying into the system. Above all, it will hurt those who aren't paying into the system, who are the poor. That seems to be the only solution they have. They

don't dare say that is their solution, but it is.

Should the Democrats take control of the Congress, you can absolutely bet that the tax cuts that we enacted will not be continued and that the economy is going to go into the tank. You can absolutely guarantee it.

Ultimately, it is productivity growth that improves the standard of living, plain and simple. Productivity growth has been exceptionally high for the last decade, and I aim to work to keep it that way by encouraging companies to invest in new plant and equipment, by encouraging workers to invest in training and education, and to do my part to say that Government keeps spending and taxes low and allows our businesses to compete as best they can.

The rewards may not be immediate. But the incredible engine that is the U.S. economy owes its success to these simple precepts.

Mr. President, I also know, and I notice the distinguished Senator from Nevada made the point, that energy is a very important matter to us. He said gas prices are going to go up again. That is going to be true if we do not have a consistently good energy policy. In the Republican energy bill, I put five bills in there myself. One to give incentives to recover the almost 1 trillion barrels of oil from oil tar sands and oil shale deposits in western Colorado, southern Wyoming, and eastern Utah. There are 3 trillion barrels of oil there, but we, according to the experts, can recover 1 trillion barrels of oil.

To put that in perspective, the whole Middle East's proven reserves are 760 billion barrels. So we have more oil in tar sands and oil shale than all of the Middle East. The problem is it is going to cost us about \$34 a barrel under current methodology and current technology to produce that oil, where it costs only 50 cents a barrel for Saudi crude.

If we move in that direction, we are going to be able to be less dependent upon other countries' oil, especially countries that hate the United States of America, like Venezuela—at least the leadership does. I don't think the people of Venezuela do.

We also put in better permitting language. The radical environmentalists have made it almost impossible to get permits to be able to develop these resources.

Third, we put in that bill incentives to develop our geothermal resources. It is estimated that Utah geothermal wells alone could produce electricity for upwards of 22 million homes. That is about 66 million people. That is almost the whole West, right from one small State. Big in geography, small in population: only 2.5 million people. The fact is we can do that. Now the incentives are in that bill. They are not as good as I would have had them, but they are better than what we had before that bill.

Most people do not realize that we have lost 250 oil refineries over the last

40 years and only built one. It is almost impossible to build an oil refinery because of radical environmentalists. The fact is, we have to build more oil refineries as long as we are dependent on oil refineries for our major source of fuel, for automobiles, trucks, trains, planes, et cetera. We have to wake up and start doing some of these things.

Last but not least, my little CLEAR Act is in that bill to give economic incentives to develop alternative fuels, alternative-fuel vehicles and alternative-fuel infrastructure. It is a little bill that helped drive the hybrid auto industry into existence. Now we are talking about plug-in hybrids. We are talking about hydrogen cars. To get the hydrogen—we only have 9 million tons of hydrogen in this country. We need 150 million tons before we can actually make that a viable fuel and put it in real cars. We are capable of doing it now, but it would be the equivalent of about \$3.60 a gallon of gas.

We are going to have to develop cookie-cutter nuclear powerplants so we can develop this hydrogen and have totally clean fuel in our country, from hydrogen cars that will work just as well as gasoline-driven cars. We are a few years away from that, but it is possible to do that if we wake up and start really thinking about the environment the way we should.

If there is such a phenomenon as global warming—I believe there is—this will be one of the ways of making our contribution to reducing the greenhouse gases, among other things.

We hear a lot of complaints on the other side about the economy. My gosh, these figures have not been met hardly at all in the last 50 years—until now. I think the President, the Republican Congress, and a number of Democrats who have supported us deserve a lot of credit for at least having us where we are. Can we improve? We hope so, and we are going to do everything in our power to do it, but I know one way we can't improve is increasing taxes, increasing Government or having more Government controls, having more regulations, which always seems to be the case when the Democrats take over the Congress. It is certainly going to be the case if they do it this time, and I don't believe the American people are going to put up with that.

I think what I am saying here today is that we cannot listen to clichés and slogans and doom-and-gloom prophecies. We have to work hard to get things done. We have the elements here to do it.

There were comments made about the minimum wage, that we haven't had an increase in 10 years. The so-called trifecta bill would have increased it to \$7 an hour, and maybe, if it was a true debate, the Democrats could have won on even a higher minimum wage. All we asked for is that we have some modest estate tax reform, which almost everybody admits would be beneficial to the economy at large and to our families, and especially

small businesses that could lose their businesses—small farmers, family farmers, who could lose their farms. But, no, that was stopped by a filibuster, which has become the principal means of obstruction ever since the George Mitchell days when he filibustered.

I thought he was a great majority leader. Don't anybody misconstrue what I am saying. He was, but he was tough. But he started to filibuster everything he disagreed with, or the Democrats disagreed with. Of course, here we are today doing the same thing.

I would like to see us get rid of partisanship, where we can work together in the best interests of our country, without the mouthing off about how bad one side or the other side is, and really do what we were really sent here to do. I admit that we are in an election year and people want to win. So things are said that probably wouldn't be said in a non-election year. I would like to even tone that down a little bit and let's recognize the economy is a good economy. Could it be better? I doubt under the circumstances, but we can all work to try to make it better.

Are some people suffering in our society? I said in my remarks today that there are, and we ought to work to try alleviate that. We have done a lot to alleviate that.

As I have said, the bottom 50 percent only pay 3 percent of all Federal income taxes, and many of them don't pay taxes at all. A goodly number of them get help from the Federal Government. And that is from both parties, not just the Democratic Party. That is because in the past we have worked in bipartisan ways to do these things.

I hope we can continue that. I wish we could get rid of the obstructionary tactics that we have had on judges and some other issues over the last number of years.

I wish we could get behind whoever the President the United States is, and especially right now. President Bush is trying to do the best he can to stem the tide of terrorism in the world, but he also is doing a good job with regard to the economy with hopefully our help.

Whoever the President is the next time, I hope, whether it is a Democrat or a Republican, that we can work together in the best interests of our country. It would be a wonderful, pleasant change from the last 10 years that I have seen. Both parties are at fault. I am not saying equally, but both parties have reason to improve. All I can say is, how do you knock an economy that is clearly as good as this one is and continue to bad-mouth it when in fact the facts all show otherwise? I don't know how they can continue to drumbeat this day in and day out by some on the other side who know that is wrong.

I yield the floor.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9:30 A.M. TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until 9:30 tomorrow morning.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 6:42 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, September 21, 2006, at 9:30 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate September 20, 2006:

SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

MARK J. WARSHAWSHY, OF MARYLAND, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ADVISORY BOARD FOR A TERM EXPIRING SEPTEMBER 30, 2012, VICE HAROLD DAUB, TERM EXPIRED.

DANA K. BILYEU, OF NEVADA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ADVISORY BOARD FOR A TERM EXPIRING SEPTEMBER 30, 2010, VICE GERALD M. SHEA, TERM EXPIRED.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

BARBARA BOXER, OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE SIXTY-FIRST SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE UNITED NATIONS.

NORMAN B. COLEMAN, OF MINNESOTA, TO BE A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE SIXTY-FIRST SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE UNITED NATIONS.

CECIL E. FLOYD, OF SOUTH CAROLINA, TO BE AN ALTERNATE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE SIXTY-FIRST SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE UNITED NATIONS.

INTER-AMERICAN FOUNDATION

KAY KELLEY ARNOLD, OF ARKANSAS, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE INTER-AMERICAN FOUNDATION FOR A TERM EXPIRING OCTOBER 6, 2010. (REAPPOINTMENT)

GARY C. BRYNER, OF UTAH, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE INTER-AMERICAN FOUNDATION FOR A TERM EXPIRING JUNE 26, 2008, VICE NANCY DORN, TERM EXPIRED.

THOMAS JOSEPH DODD, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE INTER-AMERICAN FOUNDATION FOR A TERM EXPIRING JUNE 26, 2008, VICE NADINE HOGAN.

HECTOR E. MORALES, OF TEXAS, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE INTER-AMERICAN FOUNDATION FOR A TERM EXPIRING SEPTEMBER 20, 2010, VICE JOSE A. FOURQUET, RESIGNED.

JOHN P. SALAZAR, OF NEW MEXICO, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE INTER-AMERICAN FOUNDATION FOR A TERM EXPIRING SEPTEMBER 20, 2012, VICE ANITA PEREZ FERGUSON.

THOMAS A. SHANNON, JR., OF VIRGINIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE INTER-AMERICAN FOUNDATION FOR A TERM EXPIRING SEPTEMBER 20, 2012, VICE ROGER FRANCISCO NORIEGA.

JACK VAUGHN, OF TEXAS, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE INTER-AMERICAN FOUNDATION FOR A TERM EXPIRING SEPTEMBER 20, 2012. (REAPPOINTMENT)

IN THE COAST GUARD

THE FOLLOWING NAMES OFFICERS OF THE COAST GUARD PERMANENT COMMISSIONED TEACHING STAFF FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD UNDER TITLE 14, U.S.C., SECTION 188:

To be captain

PAUL S. SZWED, 0000

To be commander

BRIGID M. PAVILONIS, 0000

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE OF GENERAL IN THE ARMY WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be general

GEN. DANK K. MCNEILL, 0000

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. WILLIAM C. KIRKLAND, 0000

IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT AS VICE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS, UNITED STATES NAVY AND APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 601 AND 5035:

To be admiral

VICE ADM. PATRICK M. WALSH, 0000

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be vice admiral

REAR ADM. JOHN J. DONNELLY, 7223

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be vice admiral

REAR ADM. THOMAS J. KILCLINE, JR., 0000

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be vice admiral

REAR ADM. MELVIN G. WILLIAMS, JR., 0000

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR REGULAR APPOINTMENT IN THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 531:

To be major

ANDREA R. GRIFFIN, 0000

THE FOLLOWING NAMED INDIVIDUAL TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

RUSSELL G. BOESTER, 0000

DISCHARGED NOMINATIONS

The Senate Committee on Foreign Relations was discharged from further consideration of the following nominations and the nominations were confirmed:

BARBARA BOXER, OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE SIXTY-FIRST SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE UNITED NATIONS.

NORMAN B. COLEMAN, OF MINNESOTA, TO BE A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE SIXTY-FIRST SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE UNITED NATIONS.

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate Wednesday, September 20, 2006:

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

CINDY LOU COURVILLE, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE AFRICAN UNION, WITH THE RANK OF AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY.

THE ABOVE NOMINATION WAS APPROVED SUBJECT TO THE NOMINEE'S COMMITMENT TO RESPOND TO REQUESTS TO APPEAR AND TESTIFY BEFORE ANY DULY CONSTITUTED COMMITTEE OF THE SENATE.

BARBARA BOXER, OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE SIXTY-FIRST SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE UNITED NATIONS.

NORMAN B. COLEMAN, OF MINNESOTA, TO BE A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE SIXTY-FIRST SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE UNITED NATIONS.

WITHDRAWALS

Executive Message transmitted by the President to the Senate on September 20, 2006 withdrawing from further Senate consideration the following nominations:

NADINE HOGAN, OF FLORIDA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE INTER-AMERICAN FOUNDATION FOR A TERM EXPIRING JUNE 26, 2008, VICE FRANK D. YTURRIA, TERM EXPIRED, WHICH WAS SENT TO THE SENATE ON JANUARY 24, 2005.

JOHN E. MAUPIN, JR., OF TENNESSEE, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ADVISORY BOARD FOR A TERM EXPIRING SEPTEMBER 30, 2010, VICE GERALD M. SHEA, TERM EXPIRED, WHICH WAS SENT TO THE SENATE ON SEPTEMBER 6, 2005.

NADINE HOGAN, OF FLORIDA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE INTER-AMERICAN FOUNDATION FOR A TERM EXPIRING JUNE 26, 2008 (REAPPOINTMENT), TO WHICH POSITION SHE WAS APPOINTED DURING THE LAST RECESS OF THE SENATE, WHICH WAS SENT TO THE SENATE ON FEBRUARY 10, 2006.